UNITED
NATIONS

EP

Governing Council
of the United Nations
Environment Programme

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/GC.19/6/Add.1
11 November 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Nineteenth session
Nairobi, 27 January - 7 February 1997
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

THE ENVIRONMENT FUND AND ADMINISTRATIVE
AND OTHER BUDGETARY MATTERS

Prevention of waste, fraud and mismanagement
Report by the Executive Director

Addendum

Achieving significant efficiencies in the Organization

1. Building on the positive results achieved so far with the implementation of its comprehensive management reform programme (see paragraph 7 of document UNEP/GC.19/6), the Secretariat is undertaking steps to realize further efficiencies in the Organization. These are three-fold.

Managerial reporting system

2. Between February and May 1996, the Secretariat undertook an efficiency review on managerial reporting within the framework of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management's initiative towards "Achieving significant efficiencies in the Organization". This review looked into ways and means of streamlining and increasing the efficiency of managerial reporting, with the objective of reducing the reporting burden on managers and staff, while simultaneously increasing the effectiveness of reporting as a managerial tool. Implementation of the 12 recommendations formulated in the review is expected to lead to cost savings of about $ 200,000 a year.

3. For the implementation of one of these recommendations, the Secretariat has prepared a blueprint of a system for the efficient and effective

* UNEP/GC.19/1.

Na.96-0685 121196 121196

/...

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

management of programme/project information. The conceptual design of the managerial reporting system has been completed, based on an integrated system of databases and document libraries accessible over internet/intranet. The development of the system was initiated with available hardware and human resources.

4. The strategy to be implemented during the second phase which is now under way is primarily based on intelligent use of the Information Technology (IT) that combines best approaches and tools. It will involve re-engineering of the necessary processes for simplifying work practices and eliminating redundant functions, thereby providing maximum value for investment in IT.

5. The expected results are:

(a) Timely and accurate information for management decision-making, resulting in a better performing organization;

(b) Savings in staff time for reporting while increasing staff time available for substantive activities; and

(c) Overall productivity enhancements through simplified and/or streamlined processes and automated procedures for routine tasks.

6. The Secretariat aims to have an operational system in place by the beginning of the biennium 1998-1999.

Implementation of evaluation, audit and OIOS review recommendations

7. An in-depth evaluation of the Environment Programme was carried out in 1995. Every year, an external auditors' report is produced, and internal auditors' reports are issued periodically. In September 1996, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) at United Nations Headquarters conducted a review of UNEP's programme and administrative practices, and a report with findings and recommendations is expected in November 1996.

8. Most of the findings and recommendations for implementation contained in the above-mentioned reports relate to management improvement, efficiency enhancement, and cost savings. It is therefore essential that the recommendations originating from evaluations and audits are implemented fully, consistently and in time.

9. The Secretariat is refining a system to improve the implementation of evaluation and audit recommendations and to monitor the implementation process.

10. For this purpose, an implementation plan will be prepared by managers, with specific deadlines for the various steps to be taken to fully achieve the objectives of the recommendations. Such implementation plans will contain performance indicators and means of verification to establish the successful execution of each recommendation.

Other measures

11. An Advisory Group has been set up to support and assist the efficiency review process, to identify further measures to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

12. Interested UNEP and UNON staff and members of the Staff Association have been invited to participate in the work of the Advisory Group on Efficiency (AGE). The Staff Association and several individuals in both UNEP and UNON have already proposed a number of measures to enhance the productivity of the Organization. The Advisory Group on Efficiency will build on these efforts, thereby ensuring that further efficiency improvements will be introduced as a collective effort to increase efficiency and reduce operational costs in an appropriate, non-disruptive and constructive manner.

13. AGE will establish criteria for the prioritization and selection of activities for efficiency improvement; it will prepare a programme of work and ensure that proper monitoring techniques are used to achieve the desired results. Immediate activities will be planned up to the end of December 1996, as part of a continuous process, drawing on the experience of other organizations and departments in the United Nations system.